



**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62706**

**ROD R. BLAGOJEVICH  
GOVERNOR**

July 26, 2007

The Honorable Charles B. Rangel  
Chairman  
Committee on Ways and Means  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John D. Dingell  
Chairman  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Rangel and Chairman Dingell:

I am writing to express my strong support for the provisions in the Children's Health and Medicare Protection (CHAMP) Act, H.R. 3162, to extend and improve the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). Your legislation demonstrates the same commitment to meeting the healthcare needs of children that we are working so hard to achieve in Illinois through our All Kids program.

In particular, I appreciate your decision to provide Illinois and other states with the ability to obtain waivers to meet the specific needs of our residents. The goals of SCHIP are national, but flexibility is needed to ensure that SCHIP implementation reflects the situation in individual states.

As you know, Illinois has used current waiver authority in our KidCare Parent Coverage Demonstration. By offering coverage to a wider population of parents, we have been able to achieve a greater take-up of insurance by children. The correlation is evident based on the numbers. During the time period that we have covered parents under the waiver, Illinois has added over 360,000 children to Medicaid and SCHIP coverage. That is a 38 percent increase in the number of children covered, while during most of this time period there was no change in the income threshold for children. In Illinois, we have found that offering coverage to parents is critical to maximizing the enrollment of children.

For those reasons, I strongly support the provisions in H.R. 3162 that give states the option to obtain a waiver to cover adults. I also support the options available to states to cover pregnant women, legal immigrant children and pregnant women, and older children as well as family planning services. With the increased funding provided under H.R. 3162, combined with state flexibility to expand coverage, you have crafted a bill that provides the tools we need to improve the health of Illinoisans.

Again, I want to express my support for your efforts and look forward to working with you on this and other healthcare initiatives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Rod Blagojevich". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Rod" and last name "Blagojevich" clearly legible.

Rod R. Blagojevich  
Governor